

## Gibbons Lacrosse Player's Life Saved by Defibrillator

By Nick Stevens

Raleigh, N.C. - Alex Beuris, a senior lacrosse player at Cardinal Gibbons, suffered a heart-stopping injury on Saturday morning, and if it weren't for the quick action and a machine called an Automated External Defibrillator, he might not be alive today.

Beuris was hit in the chest with the ball after a Providence Day player took a shot during the game.

"When it first happened, I didn't know what happened ... I didn't want to be one of those parents to run out on the field and go all crazy," Alex's mother, Sharon, told WRAL on Monday.

The blow caused his heart to stop beating and Alex stopped breathing.

"He started having a seizure, so I knew something wasn't right," his mother said. "When I got out there, he looked blue."

Sharon Beuris and Alex's 12-year-old sister were in attendance, but his father, Greg, was at a business conference in Daytona Beach, Fla. He said he received the call around 12:40 that afternoon, just after his airplane landed.

"We were just so fortunate that, for one, there were medical professionals in the bleachers, two or three from the other team," Greg Beuris said.

"Sharron and I are just so thankful that they were there, the defibrillator was there, and it all was done in the right way."

The medical professionals, spectators at the game, used a combination of an AED and CPR to jump start Alex's heart, and ultimately, prevent him from dying.

"There's no doubt in my mind that his heart stopped, he stopped breathing, and if not for them it would be a much different situation," his father said.

Alex was rushed to WakeMed Hospital on Saturday afternoon, and the family returned home, with their son on Monday afternoon.

The Providence Day player that delivered the heart-stopping shot was playing within the rules, according to the Beuris family. "He took a good shot," Sharon Beuris said.

The father of the Providence Day player went to the emergency room at WakeMed to check on Alex's condition.

"I can't say enough about the support we've gotten from people we know, members of the team, and people we don't really know that well," Greg Beuris said. "It just makes you feel good about people."

Gibbons principal Jason Curtis said the defibrillator used was one that Gibbons has on its campus. The machines can cost in the thousands of dollars, and the prices can scare away some potential buyers.

WakeMed purchased AEDs for each middle and high school in Wake County in November 2003, and Wake County Senior Director for Athletics Bobby Guthrie said some high schools now have more than one AED.

Ravenscroft has eight AEDs on its campus, including one that travels around with their athletic trainer.

Alex was familiar with the AED that the lacrosse team carried with them before the incident happened on Saturday.

"He was the only freshman to make the team," his mother said, reflecting back to his freshman year at Gibbons, "and his job was to bring the AED with him."

Alex is a senior at Cardinal Gibbons this year, and was named first-team All-State in 2007 for men's lacrosse as a defender. The family said Alex is at home and doing well.

The game between Cardinal Gibbons and Providence Day was suspended in the fourth quarter with Cardinal Gibbons leading 5-3.

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